

THE ROMANIAN INSPECTORATE GENERAL FOR THE NAVY, BETWEEN 1930 AND 1936

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Abstract

This paper tries to analyse the last period of existence for the Romanian Navy General Inspectorate, as the command unit for the Romanian Navy, between 1930 and 1936. This period was marked by many ambiguities and controversies at the highest level, as the military body of the country sought new organisation patterns at the beginning of the '30s. As a result of the danger posed by the revanchist countries surrounding it, the Romanian Army and its naval forces had to face many consecutive reorganisations, moving on from an inspectorate/command under the Defence Ministry to an Undersecretary in a newly formed ministry.

Key words: Navy, Naval Inspectorate, naval forces, Ministry for Air and Navy

1. Introduction

Between 1919, when the newly formed Army Inspectorates were formed, which was in itself a return to the pre-war situation and 1930, when the Naval Command was reinstituted in parallel with the Navy Inspectorate-General, this force had many alterations. For a long time the Navy was the "young child" of the Romanian Army, the least funded and ignored in many senses. After the first years though, the Navy enjoyed a period of attention from the leadership of the state, which was translated in credits to buy new ships. Until the biggest of these credits, in 1925-1926, the War Ministry was able to improve Romania's naval defence only through administrative means.

The command unit for the Navy went from a Command, which was a remnant from the war and was replaced by the Naval Technical Inspectorate in 1921. This inspectorate managed to bring under the same roof the command and the planning structures, which were those of the Naval Directorate, which was now a part of the inspectorate.

We want to follow, in this paper, the steps of the leadership of the Army to improve the management of the Navy and also to analyse the evolution of the Navy Inspectorate-General in this period of great change for this command, and age when there were still some questions about the maritime future of the country. Although this period was tackled in some books on the history of the Navy, the fourth decade of the last century was never individualized from the point of view of the leadership of the Navy.

2. Setting up the Naval Command

In 1930, through the Royal Decree no. 1462/30.04.1930 – "Law on the Organization of the Army", the Naval Command was re-established, as a subordinate unit to the Inspectorate-General. At that time, according to the order of battle, the main units of the command of the Navy, the Directorate and the Naval Staff were put under the newly formed Command, while Vice Admiral Scodrea Vasile became the Commander of the Navy, while also keeping the post of Inspector-General. We can see the transfer of the former duties of the Inspectorate to the Naval Command, according to article 49 of the law, which described the powers of the Army Inspectors: "a) the organization, preparation and training for the units and schools; b) the creation of specific regulations and papers

for the service; c) the organization, supply and control of materials for the troops and services; d) control over the officers for the units, services and establishments; e) administration of the funds". These powers, however, were given to the Commanders for the Navy, Cavalry and Air Force¹, which shows, from our point of view, that the newly-founded structure, that Naval Command, had „the total command over the troops, services, depots, establishments and schools pertaining to the Navy”.²

This organization chart for the Navy was in effect for the most part of 1930, with Vice Admiral Scodrea as Inspector General and Commander of the Navy, which was confirmed by a Ministerial Decision, nr. 4 from January 1 1931. This decision named the primary budgetary coordinators, and for the Navy this was vice admiral Scodrea. Under these circumstances, according to the law the Navy Inspectorate-General was *de facto* disbanded, although formally it still existed, as it was stated by the Law of the Organization of the Ministries of 1929. Basically, all of the functions and powers were switched to the Naval Command. Vice Admiral Scodrea kept the post of the Inspector General, but the leadership of the Navy was moved to the Naval Command.

The accent was therefore moved to the Naval Command and this situation was the same until Prince Nicolae was named Inspector General.³ Before this, however, after Carol II returned and reclaimed the throne, the sovereign named his brother, through the Royal Decree nr. 2136/ June 9 1930 „Inspector General for the Army, Navy and Air Force”.⁴ This strictly formal title was completed through another Royal Decree nr. 2144, by which the Prince was named as Royal Adjutant „as a reward for the care he took for the Army in these last years”.⁵

On May 1 1931, another decree was issued, nr. 1558, by which Prince Nicolae, who was at that time Inspector for the Army, Navy and Air Force, was named on a more grounded post: Naval Inspector General. The same act named Vice Admiral Scodrea as Chief of the Naval Command, in fact a confirmation of the powers he held for almost a year. This was a necessary step to make room for Prince Nicolae at the helm of the Inspectorate-General. This was confirmed in the decree, where it was said that Vice Admiral Scodrea exerted his command according to article 49 of the Law for the Organization of the Army of April 30 1930.⁶ Despite the fact the naming a Royal member in a honorific post, or at least one that seemed that way, for the Navy this event had significant effects. At the same time as the arrival of Prince Nicolae at the head of the Inspectorate-General, former units were established, like the Naval Staff, and the Directorate was taken from the Naval Command and placed under the orders of the Inspectorate. This meant that the naval forces had two general staffs, the one of the Inspectorate and the one of the Naval Command. After a year, in which time the Naval Command was the single authority for the Navy, in 1931 we have a new situation: the Naval Command was relegated to simply command the two divisions, the Maritime Division and the Danube Division.

On July 14 1931 the Inspectorate-General issued a report to the Army Ministry, transforming itself from a technical structure, as stated by the Army Law, in a command unit.⁷ This fact was in direct contradiction with the Law for the Organization of the Ministries of 1929, which clearly stated that the Inspectorate could only inspect those units not under a division. More so, the other structures and services, like the Naval Arsenal and Naval Schools, were placed under the Inspectorate. Other than the order of battle, which clearly shows the inferiority of the Naval Command, we find other proof to this. For example, in the meeting of the Naval Advisory Committee on September 8 1932, which analysed the difficulties that the Navy had to navigate with the lack of regulations and books. The analysts stated that the Navy „lacked documents” and was facing an „urgency for resolving this

¹ Monitorul Oastei, no. 7, 1 July 1930, p. 197.

² Ibid, p. 203.

³ Dan-Silviu Boerescu, *Cu arma în mână! Carierele militare şi faptele de arme ale membrilor dinastiei române*, (Bucharest: Integral, 2018), 100.

⁴ Monitorul Oastei, no. 24/20 June 1930, p. 440.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Documentar cu date şi evenimente din istoricul Marinei Militare (perioada 1843-1944), vol. I (further on Documentar cu date şi evenimente), a paper based on archival documents, written by IInd rank captains Dumitru Cozmei and Emil Mărculescu, (Mangalia, 1979), 287.

⁷ Romanian National Military Archives, Fund: Cabinetul Ministrului, File 152, f. 398.

issue”⁸. This situation was presented by Gheorghe Koslinski, the Chairman for the Commission for Regulations of the Naval Inspectorate-General and he issued this mission to the Naval Command.

Also, this unclear situation caused by a dicephalus leadership system soon provoked a hostile reaction from the Naval Command, which was put in an inferior position to the Inspectorate. In a report to the Naval Inspectorate-General, led at the time by Army Inspector General Marcel Olteanu, Vice Admiral Scodrea stated the consequences the effects of this doubling of responsibilities between the Naval Command and the Inspectorate. According to this memo, the structure that should be at the top of the Navy, but it had „been transformed in a structure that only transmits orders and even those, only when the Inspectorate didn’t issue those orders directly”.⁹ Also, there were other negative consequences from this leadership formula, like the fact that some units under the Naval Command were placed under the Inspectorate. By taking the Directorate from the Naval Command and giving it to the Inspectorate, the Naval Command was incapable to direct its forces, to direct their training, with serious consequences for the fighting capabilities. Equally negative were the psychological effects, because „the prestige of the Naval Command was destroyed by the diminishment of its duties, with bad effects on the spirit of discipline”.¹⁰ Vice admiral Scodrea concluded the effects of these measures: „by the intentional removal of the duties of the Naval Command, by taking away most of its units and by moving this structure from Bucharest to Constanta, the officers and the staff may very well understand that this is actually a demotion for this Command. It is unquestionable that this understanding can only provoke a decrease in discipline”.¹¹

The Chief of the Naval Command thought that the best way to fix this was to move his command back to Bucharest, as a part of the Ministry of the Army and to return its powers as the sole command and inspection structure for the Navy. The Navy Inspectorate-General would then become a purely technical unit. The authorities in the ministry didn’t see it that way, however, and the resolution of the Minister – General Constantin Ștefănescu Amza - on this paper said: „The Naval Inspectorate-General should be the one to remain in Bucharest, as it is part of the Army Supreme Council and also an integral component of the Ministry. The Naval Command, on the other hand, does not have to be in Bucharest. It should be near its fighting element, the Sea, which is its reason to exist and its life. Therefore, the situation will stay as it is”¹²

It is our perspective on the issue of the location of the Naval Command that the decision made by the Minister is a debatable one. On the one hand, knowing how things happened in the Second World War, we could argue that the presence of the Naval Command near the shores of the Black Sea was justified, from the perspective of naval leadership against the USSR in the Black Sea. On the other hand, as a higher command structure, its place could also be argued to have belonged in the capital, with the General Staff and the Ministry. As to Vice Admiral’s Scodrea complaints about the organization chart as it was made in 1931, we think that his arguments were quite valid and that they were ignored by the Minister, who didn’t take the necessary measure to resolve this issue.

Among the first measures taken by the new leadership system was to change the name of the naval forces from “Marina Militară” (Navy), as it was in the official documents until then, like the former Navy Law of 1898, or the more recent one, the Law for the organization of the Army of 1930, into the “Marina de Războiu” (War Marine).¹³ A month later, on June 6 1931, we have a new change in nomenclature, this time for the ships themselves. Their names would be preceded by the formula “NMS” (His Majesty’s Ship). This decree referenced the connection that Navy shared with the first King of Romania, Carol I. In his time the Navy was actually called “The Royal Flotilla of Romania”.¹⁴

⁸ Loc .cit. File 830, f. 79.

⁹ Loc. cit., File 152, f. 399.

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ibid, f. 400.

¹² Ibid, f. 398.

¹³ Înaltul Decret nr. 1730 din 20 mai 1931.

¹⁴ *Monitorul Oastei*, no. 21/20 June 1931, p. 433.

On final change in the name occurred in 1931 as well, and it was requested by the Inspectorate-General with the memo no. 2081/October 28, in the sense that the name of the Navy was changed again into the "Royal Navy", "to follow in the footsteps of the old and because, if all of the ships are His Majesty's, then their total must form the Royal Navy".¹⁵

3. The Inspectorate-General under the leadership of Army officers

In the next state, in 1932, the post of Navy Inspector-General was occupied, however briefly, by General Henry Cihiski¹⁶, a former Army Minister in the Maniu Government and a big contributor to the Army Law of 1930. According to the Royal Order of the King to the Army Ministry, no. 3134/January 23 1932, General Cihoski replaced Prince Nicolae, who left in vacation for two months, from January 10 to March. On March 5 General Cihoski resigned and was promoted as an Army Corps General in reserve. His place at the head of the Inspectorate-General was taken, according to the Royal Order no. 2686, by Army Inspector General Olteanu, as replacement to Prince Nicolae, still in vacation.¹⁷

New organization changes followed, mainly through laws, such as the Law for the Organization and Workings of the Defence Ministry, of June 8 1932. This law, as the name suggests, dealt mostly with the inner workings of the ministry charged with national security. The law also abolished all of the provisions regarding the Army Ministry in the broader Law for the Organization of the Ministries on 1929 (art. 97-113).¹⁸ The new law changed the statute of the inspectorates somewhat, as they were organized in 1929, in the sense that the term "technical and administrative structures" was replaced by "leadership structures for administrative and technical issues". The simple introduction of the word "leadership" strengthened the position of the Inspectorate-General in the face of the Naval Command, which, although in a position of subordination according to the organizational chart, by having a Chief of Staff, its own administrative services and offices, tended to lead to a division of responsibilities in the field of naval forces management. Although this amendment was a good thing to clarify the supreme role played by the General-Inspectorate, it should be noted that Air Force was one step ahead; the law provided that among the "upper governing, command and training structures" there should be a special Under-Secretary dedicated solely to the Air Force – the Air Force Under-Secretary.¹⁹

Article 32 of the law showed that all Inspectors-Generals had the powers and command rights „as the Army Corps Commanders”²⁰, with whom they were equalled by the law. Through this, the Navy's supreme command position was turned back to that of the 1920's that is to the inherent post-war disorganization period. If from 1926, namely the year when the Technical Inspectorate turned into the Inspectorate-General, the supreme naval position, that of the Inspector-General was ranked as a general Army Inspector, and the commanders of the Sea and the Danube divisions had the same rank as Army Corps Generals, we can see that through the 1932 Law of organization of the Ministry of National Defence, there has been a demotion for the leadership of the Navy.

Regarding the duties of the Navy Inspectorate-General, according to the new organization, these were:

- Command of river and maritime forces, navy establishments and services;
- Fluvial and sea defence, preparation of cooperation with the army and the aviation;
- The superior direction of all Navy tasks;
- It oversees the execution of the Navy equipment and supply plans;
- Controls the use, maintenance and repair of weapons and materials of all categories for the Navy;
- Organizes Navy's headquarters, units, schools, services and establishments;

¹⁵ Romanian National Military Archives, Fund: Inspectoratul General al Marinei, File 828, f. 50.

¹⁶ At that time he was the Commander of Army Inspectorate III. Valeriu Avram, Lucian Drăghici, Gabriel-George Pătraşcu, Ion Rîşnoveanu, *Războiul de întregire (1916-1919) Comandanţi militari români*, (Bucharest: Editura Centrului Tehnic-Editorial al Armatei, 2016), 35

¹⁷ Romanian National Military Archives, Fund: Inspectoratul General al Marinei, File 830, f. 13.

¹⁸ Romania Official Gazette, no. 132/8 June 1932.

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Ibid

- Prepares and guides the training of Navy units;
- Tracks the progress made by other countries in the field of naval warfare and makes proposals for their use in the profit of our Navy;
- Exercises administrative control over naval units, services and establishments;
- Budgetary management.²¹

The analysis of these attributions gives us some interesting conclusions. Thus, from the first assignment we notice that we don't have the provisions of the Law on the Organization of Ministries of 1929, in which the Inspectorate was given the right to organize and prepare the instruction of only those units that were not subordinated to a division. The superiority of the Inspectorate was now more clearly established, even on the Naval Command, established in the meantime. In fact, this was eloquently demonstrated by the inspectorate's task of organizing headquarters, units, schools, services and establishments of the Navy. Preparation of cooperation with the army and the aviation was a normal assignment for the Navy Inspectorate-General, which was the best placed and most justified structure to carry out this mission, being posted in Bucharest. Along with the Army General Staff, the Inspectorate had to ensure that all types of forces would cooperate to achieve the national strategic goals. The observation of the navy's supply plans was achieved through the actual development of some programs for procurement and discussing them within another subordinate structure: The Naval Advisory Committee. Technical issues, maintenance and verification of armaments and materials was within the job of the Naval Directorate, which reported to the Inspectorate. Regarding the information gathering actions about the neighbouring navies, or the western ones, to keep in touch with the new inventions and naval tactics implemented by them, the Navy had created quite early in the interwar years an intelligence and counter-intelligence office. Finally, as an administrative control body, it is clear that the Navy General Inspectorate controlled all of the Navy units.

The Naval Advisory Committee, „the auxiliary organ of the Navy Inspectorate-General for the study and formulation of approvals”, was also reorganized and more precise tasks were assigned to it. Its approval was necessary in dealing with the next issues:

- Organization, endowment, technical and tactical instruction at the navy units and schools;
- Technical issues of material selection, experimentation, shipbuilding, launching and disposal of existing vessels and materials, etc.;
- Drawing up draft for laws and regulations;
- Any issues related to the duties of the inspectorate and the respective directorates.²²

The composition of the Naval Advisory Committee was the following: Inspector-General – the President; The Chief of the Naval Command; the Commander of the Sea Division; the Commander of the Danube Division; the Director of the Royal Navy; a delegate of the General Technical Inspectorate; the Chief of Staff of the Inspectorate; the Commander of Navy Schools; a senior officer from the Inspectorate-General, acting as the secretary. For various issues, the committee could be filled in with any specialist officer of any rank, but only with a consultative vote.

The first series of meetings for the Naval Advisory Committee under the presidency of the Divisional General Olteanu took place in autumn of 1932. We must note that these meetings have been running over several weeks towards the end of the training period and they analysed a multitude of issues the Navy faced. One of these, as complicated as the acquisition of new ships, for example, was the situation of the men, especially for the NCO's and the petty officers. According to the analysis of the Navy Staff²³, according to the law in effect at that time, the Navy should have had 753 NCO's and petty officers (454 NCO's and 299 petty officers). On April 1, 1932, when the last general staffing was done for drawing up the order of battle, the Navy had only 430 such staff (279

²¹ Ibid

²² Ibid

²³ Both the Inspectorate and the Naval Command had a Chief of Staff, but the one of the Inspectorate was called the “Naval Staff”.

petty officers and 151 NCO's). The personnel office of the Inspectorate reached the conclusion that it would have been 10 years before it had reached an acceptable deficit, of only 36 man. It was clear that some measures were necessary, and the Naval Advisory Committee proposed a general reform in terms of status, hierarchy, recruitment and employment of these types of staff, which was only achieved with the formation of the Air and Navy Ministry in 1936.

Likewise, there were discussions a number of issues that resulted from the changes to the Navy's organizational chart, that were the result of „The Law relating to the modification of the Army's Organization Law”²⁴ and „The Law on the Establishment of the Army personnel and troops”.²⁵ Both documents included important chapters for the evolution of the Navy, recording the appearance, or where appropriate, dismantling some of the units of this service. For example, as discussed at the meeting of the Naval Advisory Committee on 8 September 1932, since the end of 1931 The Navy Inspectorate-General called for a return to the naval organic groups, abolished as early as 1930.²⁶ This was about the former organization, on groups of ships of the same type, such as the Destroyer Squadron or the Gunboat Squadron. This matter concerned mainly The Sea Division, but also to a lesser extent the Danube one. Thus, through The Law relating to the modification of the Army's Organization Law the Navy should have had a „Sea Naval Command”, as in the original law, of 1930. Moreover, this was mentioned in the law on the establishment of the Army personnel and troops as „Command of Naval Forces at Sea”.²⁷

However, until 1932 this command had not been established, which led to the Navy Inspectorate-General's reaction. It was therefore proposed to establish this command, initially subordinated to the Sea Division and equipped with the four destroyers, that is, those ships that are best suited for combat offshore. Naval Advisory Committee adopted the position of creating this unit only as a tactical command, ship management being carried out by the Sea Division through the Maritime Base.²⁸ Once it would be implemented and would have gained greater importance, it was intended to place this command under direct control of the Naval Command.

Returning to the Army personnel law, it abolished the two bodies (Marine Crew Corps and River Crew Corps), that is, those structures that dealt with the management and supervision of the disarmed battle ships of the two divisions. In the "Troops" category, the law set the following for the Navy: „The Navy Base, The Fluvial Base, Fixed maritime defence, Fixed river defence, Ships at the Sea, Ships on the Danube”²⁹. It is noticed, therefore, the absence of crew bodies, which put the Navy Inspectorate-General in difficulty with regard to the management of disarmed ships. In the organizational chart for the Navy of 1 April 1932, the new category of ships we have for the first time, „Ships at Sea”.

Therefore, the decision was made at the meeting of the Naval Advisory Committee that ship keeping was to be done by the naval bases. This solution had to be completed with provisions that were also requested by the Navy's leadership: return to organic naval groups, to which both armed ships depend, as well as those disarmed, for „closer supervision and leadership of battle ships in any position they would be”.³⁰ In this regard, the Naval Advisory Committee proposed the establishment and introduction in the battle order of the Navy of four commands:

- Fluvial Flotilla Command, consisting of 7 monitors and 3 Motor Torpedo Boats;
- Destroyer Squadron Division, consisting of four destroyers;
- Gunboat Squadron composed of four gunboats;

²⁴ Romanian Official Gazette, no. 102/4 May 1932.

²⁵ Romanian Official Gazette, no. 106/9 May 1932.

²⁶ Romanian National Military Archives, Fund: Inspectoratul General al Marinei, File 223, ff. 258-260.

²⁷ Romanian Official Gazette, no. 106/9 May 1932, p. 5.

²⁸ Romanian National Military Archives, Fund: Inspectoratul General al Marinei, File 385, f. 78.

²⁹ Romanian Official Gazette, no. 106/9 May 1932, p. 5.

³⁰ Romanian National Military Archives, Fund: Inspectoratul General al Marinei, File 385, f. 78.

- Command of the Torpedo Group, composed of three torpedo boats.³¹

This proposal was accepted and, starting with October 1932, the organizational chart reverted to the formula established in previous years, with the "Gunboat Squadron" and "Command of the Torpedo Group".³²

In the spring of 1932 the Navy Commander, Vice-Admiral Scodrea, was charged with misconduct at the Chief of the Naval Command, along with other naval officers, such as Commander V. Năsturaş, Commander M. Vasilescu (former Navy Director) and mechanic captain I. Gheorghiu. The charge was misuse of Government funds, which led to a loss of 51,628,000 lei. The amount was a result of contracts for the procurement of weapons required to modernize the ships, buying the "Dolphin" submarine, but above all, an overestimation of the price of artillery pieces for the "M" destroyers. There were more issues that were found, following an investigation by the War Ministry, irregularities in the management of the Navy's acquisition contracts: Cardiff coal supply for the Danube and the Sea Divisions³³, changing the artillery pieces for the "M" destroyers, replacing the brass tubes with supra-nickel tubes on the "R" destroyers and the payment of the over tonnage for the same destroyers. From an administrative point of view, the process of the Navy Commander imposed the appointment of Rear Admiral Ioan Bălănescu, at that time the Commander of the Sea Division, in the position of interim Commander of the Navy, until Vice Admiral Scodrea's legal problems would be resolved.

But the protraction of these investigations and sentences in the process where the Navy Commander was involved created the situation in which he would not sign any reports of the Naval Advisory Committee ever again.

4. Ioan Bălănescu - Navy Inspector-General

In May 1933 General Army Inspector Marcel Olteanu retired, and the Navy Inspectorate-General top post remained temporarily unoccupied. At the same time, Rear Admiral Bălănescu held Vice-Admiral Scodrea's position at the headquarters of the Navy Command, the latter being put at the disposition of 2nd Army Corps.³⁴ In the order of battle of the Royal Navy from October 1 1933, Rear Admiral Bălănescu appears to be temporary in the position of Naval Inspector-General by cumulating this position and serving also as Commander of the Navy, also in the place of Vice-Admiral Scodrea. Rear Admiral Petre Barbuneanu was appointed commander of the Sea Division.³⁵

Also in 1933, the legislative power promulgated a law amending the law on the organization and functioning of the Ministry of National Defense. The document, published on April 25 1933, provides some changes in the duties of the Navy General Inspectorate and the Navy Division. Thus, unlike the previous year's law, in 1933 the Inspectorate was given the task to „make studies and proposals related to the provision of the navy with war material”³⁶, a task that, until that moment, belonged only to the Navy Division. Also, as a result of the efforts to give a unique direction to the Army's equipment, the Inspectorate was to lead „all the studies, researches and experiences necessary for the choice of new armaments or war material, as well as the improvements made to those existing in the service of the Royal Navy” under the directives of the Minister of National Defense and „in connection with the General Staff and the General Technical Inspectorate”.³⁷ In other words, the superior commanders of the military body would coordinate all future ship orders and war material of the Royal Navy. This would result in a stricter control over the uniformization of arms and other facilities of the naval forces. Also, we must see in this light the other attributes given in addition to the Inspectorate in relation to the legal

³¹ Ibid

³² Romanian National Military Archives, Fund: Inspectoratul General al Marinei, File 293, ff. 418-419.

³³ This issue was actually investigated before at the time of the contracts, back in 1926, by a special commission from the War Ministry, led by Army General Mărdărescu addressed then. Romanian National Military Archives, Fund: Cabinetul Ministrului Apărării Naţionale, File 547, f. 12.

³⁴ Romanian National Military Archives, Fund: Inspectoratul General al Marinei, File 223, f. 469.

³⁵ Ibid, ff. 472-476.

³⁶ Romanian Official Gazette, no. 94/25 April 1933, p. 7.

³⁷ Ibid

provisions of 1932, namely the drawing up of contracts, overseeing their execution through the Navy Division and „reception of new materials bought through committees established by ministerial decision.”³⁸ From our point of view, these additional tasks, explained in detail in an act of such importance as the law of organization of the resort ministry, are a direct consequence of the scandal caused by the trial of the Navy Inspector-General precisely because of the irregularities in the establishment and the execution of procurement contracts, which caused losses to the Romanian state.

Until the end of the Navy General Inspectorate, in 1936, no significant changes occurred in its structure and organization. The period from 1933 to 1936 overlapped with the stage at which the Navy was led by the Rear Admiral and, from 1936, Vice-Admiral Bălănescu. At the end of the same year, through Decree-Law no. 2620 of November 14 1936, „for the establishment, organization and operation of the Ministry of Air and Marine”, The Navy Inspectorate-General was disbanded. The other structure at the top of the Navy, the Royal Navy Command survived and was integrated as „superior governing body, command and training”.³⁹

5. Conclusions

In 1930 the Navy Inspectorate had remained without part of its duties that were given to new structures: the Navy Command, who, though subordinate to it, was duplicating, the organization and functions of the inspectorate. The idea behind this decision was to create a command to deal strictly with combat preparation, leaving high level issues, such as naval politics and doctrine, ship purchases, etc. in charge of the higher structures, the Inspectorate. In practice, however, both had a similar organization, with chiefs of staffs, with offices with identical names and attributions, which, of course, can be explained by the need to ensure high functions in a navy that was still small.

The final days for the Navy Inspectorate-General arrived at the end of 1936. From our point of view, the establishment of the Air and Navy Ministry was a natural decision and an achievement that navy officers argued for a long time. A special ministry to serve the needs of two technical armies, with special requirements, was a model which the Western countries proposed for a long time and our country finally put it in practice as well. It was, in other words, a crowning event for the efforts of improving the Romanian military body during the interwar period.

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³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ *Codul General al României (Codurile, Legile și Regulamentele în vigoare)*, fondator C. Hamangiu, vol. XXIV, 1936, partea II, (Bucharest: Imprimeria Centrală), 1937, 711-713.